

Remarks

In the subject Action, the Examiner objected to claim 15 for reciting indicia provided on a gear. Applicant is requesting that claim 15 be amended in a manner that deletes the objectionable language.

Next, the Examiner objected to the drawings with respect to the same recitation in claim 15 regarding indicia on a gear. As noted above, Applicant is requesting that claim 15 be amended in a manner that deletes the objectionable language.

Next, the Examiner rejected claims 15-19 with regard to recitation of indicia on a gear and/or a selector rod. Applicant is requesting that claim 15 be amended in a manner that deletes the objectionable language (regarding indicia on the selector rod, as well as on the gear).

Next, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 4-6, 9-11, 14, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by the cited patent to Speyer, and/or under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious in view of the cited Speyer patent. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections and requests reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and reasons set forth below.

With regard to independent claim 1, from which rejected claims 4-5 depend, Applicant is seeking to amend claim 1 to emphasize that the weight plates are provided in respective stable positions relative to the weight supporting member, and to recite the additional step of lifting the weight supporting member upward together with a first subset of the weight plates engaged by the

selector rods, while leaving behind a complementary, second subset of the weight plates in their respective stable positions. Applicant respectfully submits that the Speyer bar cannot be lifted upward while leaving behind any weight plates in their respective aligned positions relative to the bar.

With regard to claim 5, Applicant is seeking to amend claim 5 to emphasize that respective bars are rigidly interconnected between pairs of similarly situated weight plates at opposite ends of the weight supporting member. Application of any such arrangement to the Speyer device would preclude tilting of the Speyer weights for mounting on and removal from the Speyer bar.

With regard to independent claim 6, from which claims 9-10 depend, Applicant is seeking to amend claim 6 to include the limitations of allowable claim 8 (while also cancelling claim 8). Applicant is also amending claim 10 in a manner similar to claim 5, to emphasize that respective bars are rigidly interconnected between similarly situated weight plates at opposite ends of the weight supporting member.

With regard to independent claim 11, from which claim 14 depends, Applicant is seeking to amend claim 11 to emphasize that the weights are provided with respective bars rigidly interconnected between respective first end and second end weight plates aligned with respective opposite end portions of the weight supporting member. As noted above, such an arrangement would interfere with the weight mounting method taught by the Speyer patent.

With regard to independent claim 15, Applicant is seeking to amend claim 15 to remove the limitation regarding indicia on the gear and/or the selector rod. Based on the Examiner's discussion of allowable subject matter, Applicant is assuming that the Examiner considered claim 15 to be patentable without the objectionable language regarding indicia.

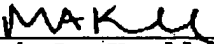
With regard to independent claim 20, Applicant is seeking to amend claim 20 to include the limitation that appeared in the Examiner's comments regarding allowability of claims 3, 8, 13, and 19, namely, the provision of a handle extending between the opposite end portions at a distance apart from the intermediate member.

Finally, Applicant is also seeking to add claims 21-23 to depend from claim 20 and recite the subject invention in greater detail, and to add claim 24 to depend from claim 1 and recite the subject invention in greater detail. Claim 21 further distinguishes the claimed invention over the Speyer reference by reciting the rigid interconnection of respective bars between respective weight plates. Claim 22 further distinguishes the claimed invention over the Speyer reference by reciting linkage of a gear to the selector rod. Claims 23 and 24 distinguish the subject invention over the Speyer reference by reciting the provision of discrete selector rod paths that are laterally spaced apart from one another.

Having addressed the issues raised in the subject Action, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of

the application as amended. The Examiner is always welcome to contact Applicant at the telephone number set forth below to discuss any matter regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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